

REMARKSStatus of claims

Claims 1, 5-14, 16, 18-20 remain in this application. Claims 1, 5-7, 10-12, 16 and 18 are currently being amended. Claims 2-4, 15 and 17 have been canceled.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Barlow (US 4,900,123). The Examiner alleges that Barlow anticipates claim 1 in that it teaches each and every element of the claim. Applicant traverses the rejection of claim 1. Barlow discloses a fiber distribution panel having horizontally mounted cassettes retained in opposing guides and not in a bulkhead as recited in Applicant's claim 1 (abstract, Fig. 1, Fig. 4). The cassettes of Barlow are used only for spooling excess fiber as the cassettes of Barlow do not have integral connectors, adapters, and rear portions having a plurality of optical fibers and fanouts as recited in amended claim 1. Specifically, amended claim 1 recites, among other things, "a bulkhead having an essentially planar surface, the surface having openings disposed thereon for receiving at least a portion of a fiber cassette", "a plurality of optical fiber cassettes having a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion further having a plurality of adapters associated therewith, each adapter having an adapter plug for providing optical connectivity without requiring removal of the cassette from the bulkhead, the rear portion having a plurality of optical fibers and fanouts associated therewith for facilitating optical coupling thereto", and a "splice module hingedly mounted to the enclosure and further having a management plate associated therewith". As demonstrated by the quoted language, Barlow fails to teach several elements of Applicant's claim 1. Therefore, Barlow fails as a 35 USC §102(b) reference when applied to amended claim 1 and claims 5-9 depending therefrom. In view of the following remarks, Applicant's respectfully requests that the 35 USC §102(b) rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 4-6 and 12-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ray (US 6,009,225). The Examiner alleges that Ray discloses a housing having a front compartment, rear compartment, a first and second side, a bulkhead, a

plurality of optical fiber cassettes mounted to the bulkhead and at least one splice module. Applicant disagrees. Ray discloses a fiber optic splice enclosure having pivotally connected splice organizer trays (abstract, Fig. 2, and Fig. 5). Ray does not, however, disclose elements of Applicant's amended independent claims 1 or 12.

Regarding amended claim 1, Ray fails to disclose at least "a plurality of optical fiber cassettes having a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion further having a plurality of adapters associated therewith, each adapter having an adapter plug for providing optical connectivity without removing the cassette from the bulkhead, the rear portion having a plurality of optical fibers and fanouts associated therewith for facilitating optical coupling thereto".

Regarding amended claim 12, Ray fails to disclose at least a splice module having "a hingedly joined splice door for holding fiber optic splices associated with optical signals flowing through at least one of a fiber optic adapter having a fiber optic connector associated therewith, the fiber optic adapter and connector further being associated with a removable fiber optic cassette located within the enclosure". In view of the foregoing remarks regarding claim 1 and 12, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 USC §102(b) rejections in view of Ray. Allowance of claim 1, dependent claims 5-6, claim 12 and dependent claims 13-14 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7-9 and 16-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Vidacovich (US 5,402,515). In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that Vidacovich discloses at least a housing having a front and rear compartment, a first and second side, a bulkhead, a plurality of optical fiber cassettes mounted to the bulkhead, and at least one splice module. Applicant disagrees. Vidacovich discloses an enclosure having connector modules capable of holding a plurality of connector drawers or trays (Fig. 2, col. 4, lines 19-21). The connector trays 24 are configured such that they have the connectors on the interior of the tray. As a result, the connectors cannot be accessed without removing the trays from the modules (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 6 and 9).

Applicant's amended claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Vidacovich for at least the reasons presented hereinbelow. Amended claim 1 recites, among other things, "a plurality of optical fiber cassettes having a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion further having a plurality of adapters associated therewith, each adapter having an adapter plug for providing optical connectivity without requiring removal of the cassette

from the bulkhead, the rear portion having a plurality of optical fibers and fanouts associated therewith for facilitating optical coupling thereto". Since Vidacovich fails to disclose an embodiment providing for the ability to connect or disconnect optical fibers without requiring removal from the enclosure, the reference does not anticipate claim 1.

Applicant's amended claim 16 recites, among other things, "a reversible fiber radius guide for maintaining a selectable bend radius for fiber optic cables carrying data to or from a fiber optic enclosure", a body having a lower face "the lower face for facilitating mounting to the exterior of the enclosure", and "the hood for facilitating reversible mounting to the exterior of the enclosure". The guides of Vidacovich consist of tabs integral with the enclosed fiber trays 24 (Fig. 3, Fig. 12), and therefore, the guides of Vidacovich do not anticipate the externally mounted reversible fiber guides of Applicant's amended claim 16.

Applicant respectfully requests that the 35 USC §102(b) rejection of claims 1, 7-9 and 16 be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Petrunia (US 5,212,761). In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that Petrunia discloses a fiber optic cassette including a plurality of adapters, a plurality of optical fiber connectors, a front face, side wall and rear face, at least one fan out device, and at least one fiber optic ribbon pigtail. As shown in Fig. 1 and 2, Petrunia utilizes a cassette that is completely enclosed such that access to the fanout member 25, fiber ribbon 24, optical connectors 20, 30 and fiber clamp 27 is not possible without removing the cassette from the enclosure and disassembling it.

In contrast, Applicant's amended claim 10 recites, among other things, an optical fiber cassette having "a side wall coupled to the optical fiber cassette", "fanout mountable to the side wall and accessible without requiring disassembly of the optical fiber cassette or removal from the enclosure" and "a plurality of optical splices each having a first end and a second end, the first end for attachment to one of the plurality of rear connectors and the second end for attachment to the fanout, the optical fiber splices further configured to be accessible without having to open or disassemble the optical fiber cassette". Petrunia fails to disclose at least these elements of claim 10. And therefore, Petrunia cannot be used to support a 35 USC §102(b) of claim 10. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 16 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Braga (US 6,363,198). Braga discloses an optical fiber cable distribution shelf that utilizes a cable management clip system (abstract). As shown in Figs. 1, 3, and 9, and described in col. 6, lines 14-24, the output cord support clip 60 is not reversible. In contrast, Applicant's fiber radius guide 28 is reversible and is not secured to the enclosure in the manner of Braga. Applicant refers the Examiner to Figs. 9-15 as well as page 9, line 15 through page 10, line 2 for additional detail regarding the fiber radius guide. The limitations recited in amended claim 16 further distinguish Applicant's reversible fiber radius guide from the output support clip of Braga. For example, claim 16 recites, among other things, "a hood extending from the body", "a supporting member having a proximate end and a distal end, the proximate end contacting the lower face of the body", "a first support", "a second support", "a first hook coupled proximate to the intersection of the supporting member and the forward portion of the first support", "a second hook", "a first pair of barbs", and "a second pair of barbs". Braga fails to disclose at least the above elements. Therefore, Braga cannot serve as the basis of a valid 35 USC §102(e) rejection of amended claim 16. Applicant respectfully requests that the 35 USC §102(e) rejection of claim 16 be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

#### Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Petrunia. As argued in connection with the 35 USC §102(b) rejection of independent claim 10, Petrunia fails to teach numerous elements of Applicant's claim. Therefore, the 35 USC §103(a) rejection of dependent claim 11 over Petrunia is improper and should be withdrawn. Applicant respectfully requests that claim 11 be allowed.

Claims 2-3 and 18-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vidacovich and in view of Petrunia (US 5,212,761). Claims 2-3 have been canceled so the rejection of those claims is moot. Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of Vidacovich and Petrunia when applied against claims 18-20. Vidacovich discloses a fiber cassette having internal connectors configured such that the cassette must be removed from the enclosure to gain access thereto (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 6, and 9, col. 4, lines 19-21). In addition, as noted by the Examiner, Vidacovich fails to disclose a ribbon pigtail and fan-out device.

Applicant's amended claim 18, on the other hand, recites a fiber optic enclosure comprising, among other things, "a plurality of removable optical fiber cassettes, the cassettes for facilitating the connection and disconnection of fiber optic cables while mounted in the enclosure" and "at least one reversible fiber radius guide". Vidacovich fails to teach or suggest at least these elements of claim 18, and combining Petrunia with Vidacovich does nothing to cure these defects. In view of these arguments, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 USC §103(a) rejection of claim 18 and claims 19-20 depending therefrom.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone call would expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (508) 416-2474.

Respectfully submitted,  
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